

Message Text

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ACTION OC-06

INFO OCT-01 CCO-00 ISO-00 SCS-06 CA-01 EUR-12 /026 W

-----064680 161251Z /20

R 151630Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5688

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: APOU, CASC, CDES, UR

SUBJECT: SHIPMENT FROM U.S.S.R. TO AMERICANS

REFS: (A) STATE 277514, (B) LENINGRAD 1687

1. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO RESOLVE DEFINITELY THE QUESTION OF SHIPMENTS BY POSTS IN THE SOVIET UNION TO AMERICAN CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS. THE PROBLEM ARISES WHEN WE HAVE TO SHIP TO THE U.S. EFFECTS OF ILL OR DECEASED AMERICANS OR ITEMS WHICH WE HAVE RETRIEVED FROM SOVIET CUSTOMS ON BEHALF OF AMERICANS.

2. THE EMBASSY PROPOSES THAT POSTS IN THE U.S.S. R. BE AUTHORIZED TO USE THE APO FOR SHIPMENT FROM THE USSR TO THE U.S. THIS WOULD HAVE THE ADVANTAGE OF BEING THE MOST CONVENIENT AND CHEAPEST WAY FOR OUR MISSIONS TO DISPOSE OF SUCH SHIPMENTS, WHILE STILL COMPLYING WITH U.S. REGULATIONS SINCE PACKAGES SENT TO THE U.S. VIA APO ARE SUBJECT TO U.S. CUSTOMS.

3. THE EMBASSY NOTES THAT USE OF THE SOVIET POST OFFICE IS CUMBERSOME AND IMPRACTICAL. PACKAGES MAILED VIA THE SOVIET POSTAL SYSTEM MUST BE BROUGHT TO A SPECIAL SECTION

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IN THE MAIN POST OFFICE, WHERE THEY MUST UNDERGO EXTENSIVE INSPECTION AND DOCUMENTATION FORMALITIES, AND THEN MUST BE WRAPPED FOR MAILING IN THE PRESENCE OF THE AUTHORITIES. IN PRACTICE, IT WOULD MEAN A HALF-WORKING DAY OR MORE OF OFFICER'S TIME FOR EACH PACKAGE MAILED IN THAT WAY.

4. ANOTHER OPTION WOULD BE TO SEND SHIPMENTS BY AIR VIA PAN AM. SUCH SHIPMENTS WOULD BE AT 2.80 RUBLES (U.S. \$3.93 AT CURRENT RATE OF EXCHANGE) PER KILO, MOSCOW TO NEW YORK. THE DISADVANTAGE OF THIS ALTERNATIVE, IN ADDITION TO THE RELATIVELY STEEP CHARGE, WOULD BE THAT WE WOULD HAVE TO COPE WITH THE VAGARIES OF SOVIET CUSTOMS. BASED ON THE EMBASSY'S CURRENT EXPERIENCE WITH AIR SHIPMENTS, WE WOULD NOT HAVE ANY MAJOR PROBLEMS, AND IN ANY CASE, WE COULD DO SO MORE QUICKLY AND MORE EFFICIENTLY THAN IN THE CASE OF THE SOVIET POSTAL SYSTEM. HOWEVER, WE WOULD BE SUBJECT ON EACH OCCASION TO THE WHIMS OF THE SOVIET CUSTOMS OFFICE, WHICH FREQUENTLY MAKES ARBITRARY DECISIONS.

5. THE EMBASSY PROPOSES THAT POSTS IN THE USSR BE AUTHORIZED TO SEND SHIPMENTS FROM THE USSR TO AMERICANS IN THE U.S. VIA THE APO. WE NOTE THAT THE VOLUME OF SUCH SHIPMENTS WOULD BE LOW (PERHAPS A DOZEN OR TWO PER YEAR). IF THE DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZES USE OF THE APO AS PROPOSED, IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO SEND PARCELS INSURED. IN VIEW OF THE SMALL VOLUME ENVISAGED, EMBASSY HELSINKI IS REQUESTED TO CHECK THE FEASIBILITY OF INSURING SUCH PARCELS SENT VIA APO. IF INSURANCE IS NOT FEASIBLE, THE EMBASSY PROPOSES TO INFORM WOULD-BE RECIPIENTS THAT WE CANNOT INSURE OR TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DELIVERY OF PACKAGES SENT VIA APO AND OFFER THE OPTION OF SHIPMENT VIA AIR.
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6. DEPARTMENT'S CONCURRENCE OR COMMENTS REQUESTED.
TOON

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 15-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MOSCOW18105
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Format: TEL
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19771252/aaaabscr.tel
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Litigation History:
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Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
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